

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification as follows:

On page 1, after the title, please insert:

a' --FIELD OF THE INVENTION--

On page 1, after line 7, please insert:

Q<sup>2</sup> --BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION--

On page 2, after line 13, please insert:

Q<sup>3</sup> --DETAILED DESCRIPTION--

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 18-19.

Please amend Claims 1-17 as follows:

1. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide with the bioactivity of the ultraspiracle protein, comprising a sequence selected from
- (a) the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1,
  - (b) sequences which have at least 85% identity with the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 over a length of at least 600 consecutive nucleotides,
  - (c) sequences which, owing to the degeneracy of the genetic code, encode the same amino acid sequence as the sequences defined under (a) and (b), and
  - (d) parts of the sequences as defined under (a), (b) and (c) which encode polypeptides which have essentially the same bioactivity as a polypeptide with the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

2. (Amended) A vector comprising at least one nucleic acid according to Claim 1.

3. (Amended) A vector according to Claim 2, wherein the nucleic acid molecule is linked functionally to regulatory sequences which ensure the expression of the nucleic acid in pro- or eukaryotic cells.

4. (Amended) A host cell comprising a nucleic acid according to Claim 1.